

This year our Oceans, and the people working to protect them, received some much needed support. As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I was able to reverse \$48 million in funding cuts for critical ocean and fisheries programs that are playing a critical role in the conservation and protection of ocean wildlife and habitats.

During the Appropriations Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Subcommittee bill mark-up this summer, I offered an amendment that reversed funding cuts for the conservation programs in the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The amendment reversed funding cuts for the Marine Debris program which helped in the collection of over two tons of derelict fishing gear in Moss Landing, the National Marine Sanctuary program which is supporting conservation efforts in the Monterey Bay and the Pacific Salmon Protected Species and Research and Management that will benefit the Southwest Fisheries Science Center in Santa Cruz.

Just as important, these programs are working to conserve Central Coast natural resources that protect the economic engines of our local economies, including tourism and fishing. Our well being and the livelihood of our ocean communities are tied to the health of our world's oceans. Therefore it is of vital importance that we continue to invest in research and conservation that protect and preserve our oceans for future generations.

The amendment reversed funding cuts for the following ocean and fisheries NOAA programs:

- Pacific Salmon Protected Species Research and Management
- National Marine Sanctuary Program
- Marine Debris Program
- Fisheries Habitat Restoration
- Integrated Ocean Observing System
- National Estuarine Research Reserve System
- Cooperative Research

### *Marine Debris Legislation*

I am also happy to report that the Marine Debris Reauthorization Act of 2011 received a second hearing just before the end of the year—bringing the bill one step closer to a vote. On December 15th the bill was presented before a subcommittee of the House Committee on Natural Resources. The bill was previously considered before a subcommittee of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Every year 14 billion pounds of trash reach our beaches and oceans, costing millions in clean up costs and lost revenue for fisheries and the tourism industry. This bill will reauthorize funding for marine debris removal, prevention and the support of public-private partnerships that are key

to keeping our beaches and oceans clean.

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